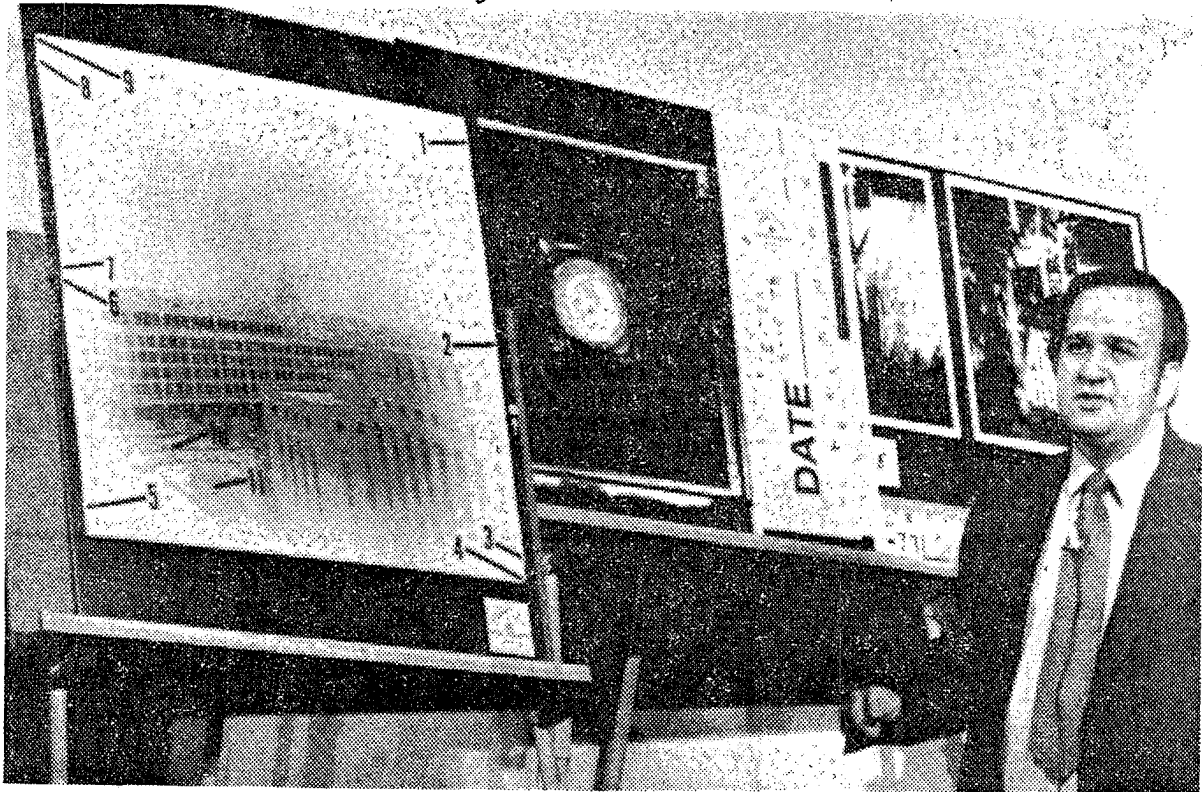


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Sgt. Cecil W. Kirk, a camera expert, appears before the House Assassination Committee to swear that the photo of Lee Harvey Oswald holding the rifle in the back yard of his home is genuine. (AP)

# Defector with Oswald data allegedly locked up by CIA

By JIM ADAMS

WASHINGTON (AP) — The CIA kept a Soviet defector who said he had information about Lee Harvey Oswald in isolation for three years in a secret vault and considered driving him crazy or killing him, an agency spokesman testified yesterday.

The defector was locked up without adequate food in the tiny concrete vault, surrounded by a fake building somewhere in the United States, said John Limond Hart, a spokesman for the CIA.

Testifying before the House Assassinations Committee, Hart said the defector, Yuri Nosenko, was watched continually and not allowed to read or occupy himself in any other way.

The CIA's "hostile interrogations" of Nosenko were "counter-productive . . . and created a lot

of misinformation" from 1963 until 1967, Hart testified.

He said that when Nosenko fashioned a chess set out of clothing, the CIA took it away from him.

When Nosenko made a calendar out of lint on the floor, "desperately trying to keep track of time," Hart said, it was swept away — and Nosenko would start another one.

Nosenko was held most of those three years in the costly and specially constructed concrete and steel vault, much like a bank vault, which was camouflaged by the fake building. Aside from saying the vault was not in the District of Columbia, Hart refused to pinpoint its location.

Hart, a retired CIA official retained by CIA Director Stansfield Turner to prepare the testimony about the Nosenko matter, said the CIA's handling of the Soviet

defector "was an abomination" and "the most dismal I have ever seen."

Nosenko defected in the 1960s, claiming he had been a Soviet KGB official. Nosenko told CIA agents that he had knowledge of Oswald's activities in Russia, but the U.S. spy agency discounted his statements, concluding he was not a bona fide defector and may have been planted by the KGB.

Later, however, the CIA reversed itself and decided in 1968 that he was a legitimate defector.

Hart said the CIA did not try to verify Nosenko's statements about Oswald, but instead tried to force him to confess that he was planted by the KGB.

A CIA official, whom Hart identified only as the deputy director of the agency's Soviet branch, wrote of fabricating a "confession" if Nosenko did not break down and give one.